WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   A   method   of   mapping   dimension-based accounting data to allow segment-based reporting, the method comprising:

> selecting   a   set   of   dimensions   from   the
> > dimension-based accounting data for a
> > segment-based account code structure;
>
> defining an order for the dimensions in the
> > set of dimensions to define the
> > segment-based account code structure;
> > and
>
> using   the   segment-based   account   code
> > structure and the dimension-based data
> > to construct account codes.

2.   The method of claim 1 wherein selecting a set   of   dimensions   comprises   validating   values associated with the dimensions using rules associated with segment-based reporting.

3.   The method of claim 2 wherein validating a value comprises determining if the value includes a character that is not valid in an account code.

4.   The method of claim 2 wherein validating a value comprises determining if the length of the value exceeds a length set for the value.

5.   The method of claim 2 wherein validating a value comprises determining if the value is null.

6. The method of claim 2 further comprising providing an error message if a value violates a rule associated with segment-based reporting.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein defining the account code structure comprises generating table entries that link segments of the account code structure to dimension headings in tables that contain the dimension-based data.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein constructing an account codes comprises:

>   locating an entry in the dimension-based data;

>   identifying dimension values from the entry; and

>   combining the identified dimension values based on the account code structure to construct the account code.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein locating an entry comprises locating an entry having at least one balance value.

10. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing steps comprising:

>   obtaining a segment-based account code;

        identifying at least one dimension based on a mapping between segments of the segment-based account code and dimensions in a dimension-based database;

        retrieving data from the dimension-based database based on the at least one dimension; and

        using the data to generate a segment-based report.

11.   The computer-readable medium of claim 10 wherein each mapping identifies a field heading for a dimension in a dimension-based table.

12.   The computer-readable medium of claim 11 wherein retrieving data from the dimension-based database comprises searching for a value from a segment of the account code in a dimension-based table.

13.   The computer-readable medium of claim 12 wherein searching for a value comprises searching a field headed by a dimension mapped from the segment.

14.   A method of preparing a dimension-based financial database so that it can be used in segment-based reporting, the method comprising:

        validating data in the dimension-based financial database against a set of

> rules established for segment-based
> reporting; and
>
> providing an error message to a user when a
> value in the dimension-based financial
> database violates a rule.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein validating data comprises validating that an entry name for a dimension does not include a character that is invalid under the rules.

16. The method of claim 14 wherein validating data comprises validating that an entry name for a dimension does not have a length that exceeds a length set for the dimension.

17. The method of claim 14 wherein validating data comprises validating that an entry description for a dimension is not null.

18. The method of claim 14 further comprising constructing an account code structure that maps segments of an account code to dimensions in the dimension-based database.

19. The method of claim 18 further comprising using the account code structure to create a set of account codes.

20.   The method of claim 19 wherein creating a set of account codes comprises retrieving values stored for dimensions in the dimension-based database.

21.   The method of claim 20 wherein retrieving values comprises only retrieving values from entries in the dimension-based database that have a value for at least one financial field.